

A Memoir for May 29

A N

9.3

ADDRESS

TO ALL

Whom it may Concern:

BEING A

Sermon (Andrew)

LETTER

*Written on OCCASION of a SERMON
preach'd May 29. 1717, &c.*

Now re-publish'd, with a

PREFACE.

L O N D O N :

Printed for R. Wilkin at the King's-Head in
S. Paul's Church-yard, and J. Bettenham at
the Crown in Peter-Noster-Row. 1718.

(Price Six-Pence.)

ADDRESS

WILLIAM W. GOSWELL

BEING A

LETTER

INTENDED ON OCCASION OF A SERMON



PUBLISHED BY A. C. B.

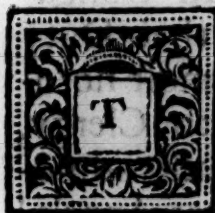
LONDON

Printed by T. W. Johnson, at the British Museum Press, 1753.

(This is the first edition.)



PREFACE.



THE following *Letter*, first publish'd on the Day of its Date, was wrote by one, who, on Principles of Conscience, has a sincere Veneration for the Christian Priesthood, thro' a Religious Regard to the Words of the Great High Priest, and Bishop of Souls, who hath said, *That he who heareth them, heareth Him*; and that *he who despiseth them, despiseth Him, and GOD who sent Him*; and a very particular Reverence for that Learned and Venerable Body, the *Clergy of the Church of England*, among whom, the most Prejudiced must allow, there are a great many Burning and Shining Lights, both for Knowledge and Piety; and to be yet more particular, no small Respect for the very Worthy Divine to whom the *Letter* was address'd with the greatest Civility. It is now re-publish'd on the Return of that Anniversary, which at first occasion'd it; with no Design to reflect upon, or reproach any Person, but rather to remove all

A 2

Occasions

The Preface.

Occasions of Scandal, from the Adversaries of our Church, who seek, and are glad to find them : Men who shew so little Concern for their Souls, that they catch at every Colour, or Pretence to find Fault with their Teachers, to whom GOD has committed the Care of them. As if a Mistake or Transgression in a Clergyman, absolv'd them from all Obligations to the Order, nay even from their Duty to GOD Himself ! as if their own most notorious Sins were justifiable, because the Clergy, who with Divine Authority instruct, admonish, and rebuke, are Men, and not Angels ! and as if their Personal Imperfections vacated that Divine Commission, by which they act !

Amongst the many Clamours rais'd against the Reverend Clergy by Libertines and those who notwithstanding their great Professions of Religion and Zeal for Reformation, where it is least needed, do yet assist them in endeavouring to destroy our Common Christianity, Inconsistency in Doctrines, and between Doctrines and Practices, is not the least. Not considering that different Views and Degrees of Information, may cause that to appear inconsistent to one, which does not seem so to another. And supposing there should be a real Inconsistency, it does not follow that he who falls into it, discerns it. If he be in the main sincere, Charity, not to say common Candor, and a Regard to humane Weakness, will

The Preface.

will dispose us to think it his Misfortune rather than his Fault. Nor is it at all difficult to account for this Diversity, without Reproach to the Clergy, unless we deem'd it just to upbraid them, that they have not the Gift of Prophecy, nor an Exemption from humane Infirmities. May the Reproach fall where it really ought to rest, on their implacable Enemies and Revilers; who, like the grand Enemy of Mankind, tempt and ensnare, and then accuse. The wilful Opposition to Truth ought to be very evident, e're we can in common Equity impute it to any Man, much less to such a Number of Learned, Pious, and Venerable Personages. And if they find the People less tractable, and more indisposed to some sort of Arguments, alledg'd in Justification of themselves in a certain Point, on the 30th of *January*, or 29th of *May*, than at any other Season; no doubt their Wisdom and Piety will incline them to comply, as the great Apostle did, with the Weakness of their Flock.

But then, on the other hand, give me leave to hope, that one may, without just Offence, nay, even in great Respect to the Persons from whom we differ, as well as for the Sake of Truth, whose Interest is to take Place of all personal Considerations, desire and endeavour to clear up the Umbrage, and remove the Difficulties; to explain

The Preface.

plain the Terms, to fix their Meaning, and argue temperately, till by a fuller View of the Subject, the seeming Contradiction vanishes. This was what I proposed in my *Letter to the Reverend Dr. S.* for I thank GOD I have no *Scruple on that Subject*, farther than the Uneasiness it gives an honest Mind, to be obliged by the irresistible Force of evident Truth, to differ from Persons whose Learning, Judgment, Piety, and general Character command our Respect; and for which Reason one wou'd be glad to reconcile this good Opinion of them with the Consciousness of one's own Integrity, and unprejudiced Pursuit of Truth.

Your Lordship, says a very ingenious and celebrated Disputant to his Adversary, *could not make an Answer to those Questions that were ask'd about Prayer, agreeable to your own purpose, and therefore have very judiciously made none.* This is a common Case in matters of Controversy, and a more commendable Method than many others that are pursued. The Reverend Doctor's Reply to the following Letter is, That it lays the Foundation for a Dispute in Politicks; that having advanced no new Opinions, he is no more concerned than any other Clergyman; therefore by reason of his constant Engagements, thinks it sufficient to refer to what has been already wrote or to some body of more Leisure for a more satisfactory Answer. The Doctor is the best Judge of his

The Preface.

his own Engagements; he has given us an ample Proof of an *extensive Charity* for the Souls of them that might fall into Delusion, a Zeal for the Advancement of Piety, and a Concern for the Honour of GOD's Ministers, both dead and living, in the excellent Use he has made of a little vacant time to urge some unwelcome Truths, and not suffer People to be led into, or continue in, a destructive Snare, by discovering whether his Antagonist was leading them. Far be it from me to divert his Thoughts from the useful Subject he had chosen, to another not agreeable; tho' with due Submission to better Judgments, neither unuseful nor unnecessary. I shall not therefore be so unmannerly as to urge him with what he does not like, but address myself to *All* whom it may concern; hoping it can be no Offence to go upon the same Views that mov'd so judicious and worthy a Divine; or to suffer the Considerations that were uppermost with him, to outweigh all Personal Regards.

That Political Disputes may happen to be interwoven with Cases of Conscience is not strange; since we are commanded to be subject not only for Wrath, but for Conscience Sake: And I shou'd think Conscience, or a Regard to the next World only, without other Prospects, is the shortest and surest Way to determine them. But that the Difficulties in the following Letter are merely Po-
li-

The Preface.

litical, and do not affect, more or less, the Generality of Christians with regard to Conscience, is not easily discern'd. *Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks* are to be made by *All* with that *Fervour and Devotion* the Doctor contends for; the *Most* are call'd upon to *Swear*; *Many* to *Fight*; and all indefinitely to *Submit*. And none of these must be done with a doubting Conscience; a firm Persuasion of the Lawfulness of our Conduct being absolutely necessary; for *whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin*.

How others act, or how far they are concern'd, is not the main Question with him who considers that every *Man* must give an *Account* of himself, both to GOD and the World; that we are *not to follow a Multitude to do Evil*, but must be determined by the Force of Truth, and the Merits of the Cause, not by humane Authority and Example, be they ever so great. The Determination and Practice of such a venerable Body as the *English* Clergy, ought without doubt to weigh more with us than any other modern Example or Authority. But I must beg leave to say, that this is not so clear and express as to be a sufficient Guide to us of the Laity. It being too well known that every *Man* brought his different Arms into the Field of Controversy, which tended more to Confusion than to Victory, or Edifying. The Arguments were almost as various

The Preface.

rious as the Men who used them. And not only different, in which Case they might all be agreeable to Truth, but even inconsistent and contradictory, and therefore some of them must be repugnant to it. So that tho' we pay all possible Respect to our Leaders, to follow them blindly without being particularly acquainted with the Grounds on which they proceed, is a Defe-
rence that I dare say they do not require. Some very well affected to the *Government*, and the Consequences of the *Revolution*, openly declare against what are called *Revolution-Principles*. Others, whose Zeal for both is not to be questioned, complain, after an *Experience of near Thirty Years, of the Insufficiency and bad Effects of some Methods*; meaning such as are taken by the former.

As to the Words NECESSARY and UN-AVOIDABLE, and what is urged on that Topic, they are Expressions of such Latitude and Uncertainty, as is shewn in the *Letter*, that they either *prove nothing, or too much*. They *prove nothing*, if the *Resistance* made against King *Charles I.* was not as *necessary and unavoidable* as any other can be. For was it not carried on by so great a Part of the Nation as overpowered those that opposed it? and this under the Authority and Countenance of a *House of Commons*, who in the Name of the *People* accus'd him of

The Preface.

endeavouring to Enslave and Destroy the English Nation, of Breach of Trust and Oath, and of acting contrary to his Office? It proves too much, if every Man is to determine the Necessity, and that there is no way of distinguishing between the real and the pretended, but by Success. If from what has been, we may argue to what ought to be, and plead Necessity in our Excuse, what Fact so atrocious as to want an Advocate? Resistance will be necessary and unavoidable oftner, I fear, than its greatest Asserters desire it shou'd. There never was, nor ever will be a Change in Government, that shall not be reputed necessary, or even Religious, Honourable, and Glorious, so long as it can maintain itself. The unsuccessful will be the only wicked Attempt, and unnatural Rebellion.

Resistance of the Supreme Authority, us'd to be held unlawful in all Cases, and upon any Account whatsoever, and there are still many worthy Persons of this Judgment: Others distinguish, and except Cases of Necessity, as they express themselves, from that general Rule: But all declare it damnable, where it is not absolutely necessary. It is therefore a Matter of the utmost Consequence to Government, which is the most considerable temporal Concern, and to that which is of yet more Importance, the Salvation of
of

The Preface.

of immortal Souls, that every one shou'd be fully instructed when *Resistance* is, and when it is *not necessary*; lest to avoid some temporal Evils, petty Inconveniencies, we disturb the Peace of Mankind, violate that Order divine Wisdom has establish'd among Men, force Governors, for the common Security, on harsher Measures than they wou'd otherwise take; and which is most deplorable, involve ourselves in the greatest of all Evils, Sin and Damnation. The *Necessity* shou'd not be left at large to be determin'd according to every Man's Fancy; it ought to be clearly stated, and defined by the ablest Heads, and with the utmost Exactness.

It is certainly more for the Honour of any Government, and of them who *Swear to it*, to found it upon *Reason and Right*, than upon mere *Necessity*, mere *Possession*, or any other *de Facto* Topic, and Reasonings as applicable to *Usurpation* as to lawful Government. He who argues only from *Necessity*, gives up all other Arguments from Scripture, Reason, Law, and Equity. For if any of these were for his Purpose, he wou'd have no Occasion to plead *Necessity*. Nor will it justify a Change, unless it be prov'd that the *Necessity* pleaded was *real* and *irrevincible*, not pretended, or of our own making; it must not be taken for granted, or upon Stories or Hearsays, but prov'd by *un-*

The Preface.

deniable Facts. Neither is all this sufficient to satisfy Conscience, unless it be also proved, that the *Change* so *necessary* and *unavoidable*, by reason of these *Facts*, renders Resistance of the supreme Authority *Lawful*. For the *Change* being the Effect of the *Resistance*, and such as could not otherwise have been produced, the *Resistance* must undoubtedly be *necessary* and *unavoidable*, if the *Change* is so. The Advocates for *Resistance* tell us, " That Princes who manage
" *Publick* Affairs with *tolerable* Care, and
" are *seldom* guilty of great Enormities a-
" gainst the *common* Good, are not to be re-
" sisted, tho' full of personal Vices." They
assert it *lawful* to resist those Princes only
who " claim an Authority to *subvert* a Con-
" stitution, to *dispense* with Laws, to erect
" an *arbitrary* Monarchy upon the Ruins of
" a *free* People; --- who levy Money for
" their own Uses without Consent of Par-
" liament, *raise* standing Armies, break thro'
" their *Coronation-Oaths*, deprive the People
" of their *Liberties*, extirpate their *Religion*,
" and entirely destroy their *Subjects* *Happi-*
" *ness*." These are the Words of a *Clergy-*
man in his Answer to the *Nonjuror's* Charge of
Schism, p. 8. But the Difficulty still remains,
for he has not told us, whether *one* or *more*
of those Oppressions render the Prince's
Conduct absolutely inconsistent with the *publick*
Good;

The Preface.

Good ; or whether they must *All* concur to justify *Resistance*, and render it *necessary*? Besides, he does not tell us whether the *Consent of Parliament* will not excuse other *Enormities against the publick Good*, as well as an unnecessary *levying of Money*. He seems to intimate as much, p. 8. but then, p. 18. he plainly declares, " That the Legislative Power is as much a *Trust* as the *Executive* can be: And *Representatives* are bound to the *publick Good and Happiness* as much as the *Prince* is. The Legislators are tied to enact such things *alone* as make for the *Safety* of the Publick ; and have no more Authority to enact things *contrary* to the *End* of their meeting together, than a *Prince* has to destroy the Publick, whose *Authority* is only for its *Preservation*. For *Publick Good* being the *End and Design* of Government, when *Publick Evil* is *designed* by a wicked Legislature, they *contradict* the *Ends* of their Authority, and in Consequence may be *resisted*." Who then must judge when the *Resistance* and *Change* are *necessary and unavoidable*? To "leave it to a *Christian People* to judge whether they be universally *oppress'd* and *enslav'd* by their *Governors* or no, as Bishop *Hoadly* does in his *Measures*, p. 34, and again, p. 171. *Edit.* I. may be of dangerous Consequence. (See also, p. 9, 10, 32, 39, 40, 99, 103, 108.)

Pro-

The Preface.

Probabilities, Arguments suited to Mens way of Talking and Acting, may serve, it's like, with them who have nothing at Heart besides temporal *Establisments*. Nothing more proper to raise the Passions, than pathetic Declamations about *Self-Preservation*, *Self-Defence*, *Self-Interest*, any thing of *Self*. But sober and unprejudiced Persons, who have learnt that *Self-Denial* which the Gospel teaches, and are not ashamed nor afraid of the *Doctrine of the Cross*, these sincere Christians search after simple Truth in all Cases; as the **ONE ONLY MATERIAL POINT**, the only sure *Foundation* for Conscience, the only *Centre* in which all our Principles and Arguments shou'd meet, Truth being preferable to all other Motives, Interests and Conveniencies.

For weak and fallacious Arguments do so much hurt to Conscience, and even to the *Cause* in whose Service they are us'd, that in common Prudence, as well as Honesty, they ought to be expos'd by all who wish well to either. Truth may suffer by them for a while, or rather the Persons who take Authority for Arguments, and great Names for strong Reasons, because they like to be deluded, as finding their temporal Account in it; are too lazy to examine, or too cowardly to oppose a Torrent, and shew themselves *valiant for the Truth*; But Truth will surely pre-

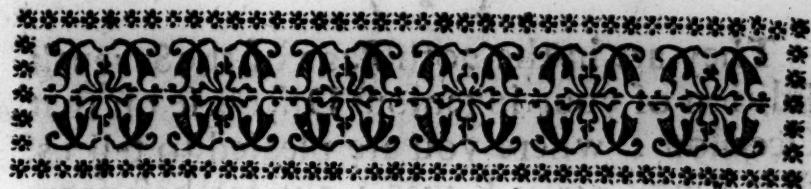
The Preface.

prevail at last, in spite of all Disadvantages; for *the Lip of Truth shall be established for ever, but a lying Tongue (and a Fallacy is a Lye) is but for a Moment.* Whatever the Inducement be, that prevails with Men to defend the Errors they have imbibed, or to fall in with those in Fashion, whether it be *Regard for their Estates, their Bodies, their Lives, their Children, and their latest Posterity;* yet if the Interest of their Souls, whose real Interest is inseparable from Truth and Justice, happens to be in the opposite Scale, as was the Case in the first Ages of the Church, which shone in the brightest Glory; when its Members were expos'd to the utmost Danger, and Loss of all but a good Conscience; they will find themselves *infinitely concern'd* to quit all the rest for this one Pearl of greatest Price, the *One and only thing necessary.* And if their Convictions come late, if they are not engaged till the twelfth Hour, they will think themselves oblig'd to be so much the more zealous for the Truth, and to labour more diligently in their Master's Vineyard. GOD calls upon his People, to shew themselves *Men*; not to mistake their true End, or the Means to obtain it; to argue rationally, that is, consistently: For tho' *Wit* may appear in maintaining Absurdities, in deceiving less bright and less capacious Understandings, not so quick
in

The Preface.

in apprehending, nor so strong in warding off a Blow; tho' the Wisdom of this World, which, in the Conclusion, worketh Death, may so conceal the Sting, as to appear the only Step to good Living, to Riches and Honour, Fame, and whatever the corrupted Heart of Man can desire: Yet the Wisdom from above is in the first Place *pure, simple, free from secular, dirty Mixtures, and low Designs, superiour to all those little Artifices which Craft and worldly Policy make use of to gain their Point.* It is a Ray from his Light whose Power is infinite as his Knowledge, and *who taketh the Wise in their own Craftiness,* bringing about his great and glorious Ends, by means the most unlikely in the way of worldly Policy; *that turneth wise Men backwards, and maketh their Knowledge foolish;* That said to Cyrus *he is my Shepherd, and shall fulfil all my Pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, Thy Foundations shall be laid.* To Cyrus, above 200 Years before he was born; Cyrus, who was no sooner born, than expos'd to wild Beasts, thro' superstitious and unreasonable Fears, and out of great Prudence to prevent what Heaven had determined; to Cyrus, a Stranger to the Common-wealth of Israel, educated a Heathen, ignorant of that Church and People he was ordain'd to restore and establish!





A
L E T T E R

To the Reverend
Dr. S N A P E, &c.

Reverend Sir,



ERE I so fortunate as to be of
your Acquaintance ; or cou'd
hope you wou'd return an An-
swer to the private Address of
an Unknown ; or were the Sub-
ject of less Consequence to the Publick
Tranquillity, and the Consciences of Parti-
cular Persons ; you shou'd not have receiv'd
the Trouble of a *Letter* in Print from a
nameless Person, in no wise fond of enga-
ging with such a Master of Learning and
Eloquence , but only desirous of better In-
formation concerning seven or eight Lines,
which severall, beside myself, want Skill to
construe in the Place where they stand, and
to accommodate to a *Restoration* Sermon.

B

They

They are in the 20th Page of the Seventh Edition of your ingenious Discourse on that Occasion ; where you are pleased to tell us, that King *Charles I.* was ‘ the farthest from ‘ pursuing those Arbitrary and Destructive ‘ Measures, in which his unhappy Son, by ‘ the Advice of treacherous Counsellors, ‘ was so deeply engaged, as to make a subsequent Change of the Government necessary and unavoidable : But no such threatening Projects to Religion and Liberty were ‘ formed under the Father’s Government. Which Words, in our Apprehension, imply, or in effect affirm, that *Arbitrary and Destructive Measures, Projects that THREATEN Religion and Liberty, make a Change of the Government NECESSARY and UNAVOIDABLE.* I hope, Sir, I have done you no Injury in laying down this Proposition, since all the Words are your own, and not wrested to a Sense different from that in which you use them. What Use your Enemies will make of them I know not, and should be sorry if they meet with so severe a Comment, as the Bishop, your Adversary, puts upon the Close of your *Letter* to him. But it is the Application that makes the Satyr ; my Design is not to look forward but backward, this being often as necessary, as for a Traveller, who has wander’d into a narrow Lane that leads to a Precipice, to retrace his Steps, if he desires to arrive in Safety at his Journey’s End. I mean,

mean, therefore, only to observe, that it appears to be your Opinion,

1st, That Resistance of Sovereign Princes, if the King of *England* be one, is not absolutely Unlawful. For in some Cases, as when *Religion and Liberty are Threaten'd*, and *Arbitrary and Destructive Measures pursued*, a Change of the Governor, for I do not think you meant a Change of the Government, as this signifies the *Constitution*, (tho' the other may happen in its Consequences to amount to this) is *Necessary and Unavoidable*.

2^{dly}, That this was not the Case with respect to K. *Charles I.* but it was in relation to K. *James II.* and therefore the *Resistance*, or *Non-Assistance*, (for they are in effect the same in the Instances under our Consideration; for which reason, and to avoid disputing about Words, I shall comprize both under the Word *Defection*) was not Lawful in the former, but was so in the latter Case. I choose the Word *Defection*, because some Advocates for Passive Obedience think themselves absolv'd, when they can say, they did not Resist their Prince, tho' they remain'd Neuters when he did not please them; forbearing to give him that Aid and Assistance, which was suitable to their Stations and Circumstances. And in my Apprehension, if there be such a thing as Natural Allegiance, much more if it be farther bound upon the Conscience by an

B 2

Oath,

Oath, he who does not assist his Prince when invaded by Foreigners, or Rebels, as well as he who actually resists by taking up Arms against him, violates his Allegiance, and is guilty of *Defection* from his Lawful Sovereign. For in this Case, *not to hinder when we can, is equivalent to approving.* As to the Words *Necessary* and *Unavoidable*, they are Expressions of great Latitude, so that it is not easy to define them. Every Man uses them according to his Fancy, and shou'd therefore say what he means by them. You tell us indeed (p. 17.) that *the worst Consequence of Habitual Sin is the almost inevitable NECESSITY of Sinning on* : But sure you do not mean that this is either the Original or *Subsequent Necessity* of our *Change of Government*. No; that was the most Deplorable of all those Calamities, from which the Restoration freed us : Somewhat else must for this reason be understood by *Necessary* and *Unavoidable*. In general, they denote certain *Means* in order to some End : The Aptitude of those Means to this End, and the Impossibility of attaining it without them, being that which renders them *Necessary* and *Unavoidable*. But then, the Lawfulness both of the End and Means is to be consider'd, before either can be allow'd *Necessary* : For Sinful Actions can never be necessary, either as End or Means ; they are avoidable by Suffering, tho' it be to Death ; which is often necessary to a Christian, who is not licens'd

to do Evil that Good may come, and is under a Necessity not to Speak, much less to Do wickedly for GOD, who has no Need of the Sinful Man. Again, Lawful and Just *Necessity*, with respect to the Subject, not the Cause, (for a Person may Lawfully submit to what another cannot Lawfully force him to) seems to me to import the Doing, or rather Suffering something against our Will; as Cutting off a Limb, to save our Life; Submitting to a less Evil, to avoid a greater; to Temporal Evils, to escape Spiritual and Eternal; to Loss and Pain, that we may keep our Consciences inviolable, free from Sin; which, because it is the greatest Evil, can never be Eligible in any Circumstances.

Temporal Prosperity is not necessary to a Christian: According to the Tenour of the Gospel, Chastisements, Afflictions, and Persecutions for Righteousness sake, are more certain Evidences of his Father's Love, and more proper to qualify him for a Crown of Glory: They are made light and easy, by entitling him to a future Reward, far exceeding the momentary Pressure; by a present *inward Joy, and inexpressible Satisfaction*, which every one, who has a just Claim to the Name of Christian, must needs prefer before all the Power, and Affluence, and Jollity of this World. And therefore the *Christian's Self Preservation*, superseding all other

other Obligations, consists in securing the Favour of God, which is better than Life. Assured of this, he can safely and chearfully trust Providence for all the rest; depending on GOD's Promises to his Church in general, and to every sincere Member of it in particular.

I am not ignorant, that Men have twenty *Necessities* of a very different kind. The Rich Man finds it *necessary* to keep up his Figure, by living as luxuriously as his Neighbours; and this leaves him no Superfluities out of his Abundance, for the Poor; Alas, Poor Man! he has no more than is *necessary* for himself. Another abhors Drunkenness, it makes him sick;---but he can't keep Company but on this Condition; it is by the Custom of the World become *Necessary* and *Unavoidable*. Some desire only to maintain themselves and Families according to their Rank, but they want Means to do it; Knavery is the readiest way, and so it becomes *Necessary*. Others enjoy Places and Preferments Civil and Ecclesiastical; their Consciences boggle at some Oaths;---but Swearing is a *Necessary* Evil;--they and their Wives and Children must not starve. A Highwayman cannot, or at least will not work, and is ashamed to beg; he thinks it *Necessary* to take his Bread where he can find it. Once more; Man being a *Free Agent*, is under no *Invincible Necessity*; but *lives here*

in a State of Tryal and Probation, invited and called upon to obey, by the strongest Obligations both of Interest and Duty ; but tempted to disobey, by outward Objects, and inward Lusts. (Sermon, p. 8.) Yet such is his Discretion, such a Wise Use does he make of his Liberty, the Generality, even of those who live in Christendom, put themselves into such Circumstances, as render the Choice of Evil and Death, Necessary and Unavoidable !

I do not suppose, Sir, that you wou'd justify or excuse such Necessities as these ; and therefore beg to know what you mean by *Necessary* and *Unavoidable*. For, if the Change of Government at the Revolution was so in any tolerable Sense, it was not barely Excusable in the Instruments, but highly Meritorious ; or, in the Words of that strenuous, and only consistent Assertor of Revolution Principles, Bishop Hoadly, he who pursued Arbitrary and Destructive Measures, might ' be opposed, not only ' without the Shadow of a Crime, but with ' Honour and Glory. (Sermon on Rom. xiii.) ' An Universal Resistance, in order to save ' a Nation and Posterity from Ruin, is so ' far from bordering, or looking toward Sin, ' that it is Vertue and Honour. The wilful ' and supine Neglecting to do it, is the Part ' which looks toward Vice. (Answ. to Dr. A. p. 156.) It seems, it must be UNIVERSAL Resistance ; for then, without doubt, it is Safe, fest,

fest, and consequently Lawful and Meritorious ! Indeed to Common Understandings there appears no Medium ; the *Defection* in 1688 was either a very good, or a very wicked Action.

So much has been said *against* Resistance by Divines of the Church of *England*, as well as others, (and all that can be said for it, again and again inculcated by Bishop *Hoadly*, of which you are no doubt apprized) that it is not necessary, and wou'd be tedious to you, *Sir*, and other Readers, and no acceptable Work to myself, to repeat what they have written upon the Subject. I shall therefore only observe, from what has been already said in this *Letter*, that the Necessity of Resistance depends upon the Lawfulness, but the Lawfulness does not arise nor follow from the supposed or apparent Necessity. For, as God *does not necessitate us to be Good*, (Serm. p. 9.) 'tis certain he is far from *necessitating* us to do Evil. If the *only* Reason that renders Resistance Lawful in *any Case*, is its being Necessary and Unavoidable, no Man, who believes a Providence, can say, that Resistance is the *only* Medium to Safety, let the Extremity be ever so great : No Man, who believes that *the Wrath of Man shall praise GOD ; and the Remainder of Wrath shall He restrain ;* altho' for a while He suffers the Sons of Violence to prosper, to insult His Inheritance,

‘ tance, to oppress *His* Elect, and to lay
 ‘ waste *His* Dwelling-Place ; that believes
 ‘ *they* are the Instruments of *His* Vengeance,
 ‘ the Scourges wherewith *He* corrects *His*
 ‘ Beloved Children ; — that *they* do but exe-
 ‘ cute *His* Decrees, whilst they are PERSE-
 ‘ CUTING *His* Saints ; — and that *when His*
 ‘ *Work is done*, *He* will interpose with a
 ‘ stretched out Arm, to baffle their Devices,
 ‘ and confound their Malice.’ (*Serm. p. 3.*)

‘ The plain and known Import of the Word
 ‘ *Absolute*, is, unlimited, unconditional, not
 ‘ clogg’d or restrain’d by any one Exception
 ‘ or Reserve.’ (*Letter to the Bishop of Bangor,*
p. 25. Edit. 4.) Therefore, *Absolute Passive O-*
bedience, with an Exception in favour of the
 Revolution, a Position one has sometimes
 met with, is a Contradiction in Terms. For
 the Doctrine of Non-Resistance, as it was
 formerly taught, and before the Distinctions,
 Limitations, &c. with which it has been
 gloss’d almost these thirty Years, were thought
 of, is so inconsistent with the Revolution, that
 after all the Pains and Subtilty that have been
 used to reconcile them, the one or other of
 them ought to be given up by every honest
 Man. Bishop *Hoadly* was aware of this, and
 therefore labours to prove Resistance Lawful
 in some Cases, in order to shew it necessary in
 that : He does not think it sufficient to Excuse,
 or Submit to it as what could not be help’d ;
 he

he carries it much farther. For, ' if (says he) ' it be not plainly Lawful or Eligible, ' no *Christian* ought in Conscience to venture ' upon it; but if it be, it must be also *Honourable* and *Glorious*.

There is another considerable Difficulty, as to a *Change of Government's* being *Necessary and Unavoidable*; and that is, who shall be Judge? Cases of Necessity must either be determin'd by Lawful Authority, and this Case in particular by the Supreme Power, as being of highest Consequence to the Nation; or else it must be left to every Man's Private Conscience. One does not see how it can be determin'd by Authority; because Changing the Government sets aside all Authority in being; unless the Laws have expressly declared, upon what Occasion, and in what Circumstances, the Supreme Authority shall be transferr'd from one hand to another. Now, if the Supreme Authority totally ceases, Government ceases with it: Sovereign and Subject being Relative Terms, and a Last Resort of the very Nature and Essence of Government: Every Governor, as such, and so far as his Authority extends, being in the Reason and Nature of things unaccountable to his Subjects, or to any but a Common Superior, if such an one there be. In which Case, the contending Parties can no longer be consider'd

sider'd as Governors and Governed, as Sovereign and Subject, but as Equals ; so far as they may appeal to a Common Superior, they are in a State of Equality, which is a State of Anarchy, if it extends to a whole Nation. Therefore, if it be Lawful for the People, by taking up Arms against the Prince, to appeal to GOD, the *only* Ruler of Princes ; it will be necessary to clear this Notion from the Objection of Anarchy, which, we know, destroys all Distinctions, Rights, and Properties ; for these depend upon Municipal Laws, which are at an End when the Government is so.

But, if the Laws are silent, and much more if they expressly declare against all Changes and Alteration beyond what they have provided for ; then is every one's private Judgment the sole Umpire of this NECESSITY ; if, after such express and ample Declarations, as some will tell you our Laws have made, and obliged the Subject to make likewise, any Man can think it Lawful, (for otherwise it cannot be Necessary) to change the Government. Nor is the Case alter'd, by being determin'd by any Number of Men whatever, unless authoriz'd by Law : For if they are not a Legal, and therefore not an Authoritative Assembly ; it is still but Private Judgment. A Multitude of Men, assembled without Law, or in Op-

position to it, tho' they may gain Impunity by their Numbers, can never acquire Authority : They are only a greater and more dangerous Riot, but are still no better than private Persons, as to their Judgments and Determinations ; having no Right to conclude for others, or to lay any Obligations on them. To grant them such a Right, wou'd be yielding up much more, than I dare say, Sir, you will ever allow to Private Judgment. What will become of the Authority of GOD's *Vicegerents* in the State, if they be thus subjected to their very Subjects ? If Private Persons be exalted above their Ruler to so high a Degree, as to judge and determine, whether or no he is their Sovereign, and they his Subjects ?

Government in the Church is in order to a Spiritual and Eternal End ; and the Means of obtaining this End, the Dispositions necessary to qualify us for it, so much out of Humane Cognizance, that the Governor cannot know, whether his Censures make Hypocrites, or sincere Christians. The Business of Salvation must be our own Work ; and every one is principally concern'd in it for himself, and not for another. 'Tis otherwise in respect of Civil Government ; whose Business is with the Outward, not Inward Man ; to hinder ill Men from hurting others, whom none can hinder doing themselves

themselves the greatest Mischief. If therefore Government be so necessary in the Church, and Private Judgment *without*, much more in *Opposition* to it, so dangerous, what must it be in the State, if allow'd to determine the highest of all Points, in Civil Matters, the Necessity of changing the Government ?

I pass over the Word *Threatned*, which, as you use it, is also an Expression of great Latitude, leaving Government very precarious. Threatnings are not always executed, nor design'd to be so; they may do their Business, and be avoided at much less Expence both to Prince and People, than by a Change of Government. They were *afraid*, says the Scripture, *where no Fear was* : Dangers are conjur'd up, and slight ones improv'd into formidable Evils, by seditious Men and crafty Politicians, who know how to impose upon the Honest and Unwary. Many Instances of which appear in the Reign of King *Charles I.* in which Fears and Jealousies were at as great a Height, as they cou'd possibly be in his Son's.

But you will say, without Reason, as it is in your Sermon, *pag. 20.* Far be it from me to detract from the Character of that excellent Prince, as well as extraordinary Christian, King *Charles I.* who was as Eminent for Publick as for Private Vertues, and under whose Government the Nation flourish'd

twelve

twelve Years in the utmost Felicity, and might long have done so, had not ambitious and unquiet Spirits brought Ruin both on King and People. Yet, if we compare the History of his Reign, and what most of us may remember of his Son's, we shall find the same Clamours made in both, the same Umbrages given or taken, the same Principles vented and pursued, evil Counsellors accus'd, tho' their Masters only suffer'd, (whom the Law seems to exempt, by giving it as a Maxim, that *the King can do no Wrong*) and the faulty Ministers escap'd.

For Proof of this, we need only compare the *Petition and Remonstrance*, Dec. 1. 1641. which bore the Authority of a *House of Commons*, with the *Memorial* presented to the Prince of Orange, and other Papers that came only from private Hands; nay, even with the Grievances the *Convention* complain'd of, and provided against in their *Petition of Right*, 1688. The Men of *Forty One* complaining of *imminent Ruin and Destruction*, --- *mischievous Devices for the Alteration of RELIGION and GOVERNMENT*, --- *Proceedings evidently --- for the Advantage and Increase of POPERY*; --- acted by *Jesuites* --- and other *Engineers and Factors for Rome*, --- so as to corrupt divers *Bishops*, --- *Privy Counsellors*, and *Persons of Trust about the King, the Prince, and the Royal Children*, --- the *Insurrection of Papists*,

Papists, not barely fear'd, but actually felt in *Ireland*, by a *bloody Massacre*. So that in the Opinion of a House of Commons, arbitrary and destructive Measures were carry'd farther in the Reign of the Father, than in that of his unhappy Son : For *Disorders* did not *meerly threaten* ; they *had not only assault-ed, but even overwhelm'd and extinguish'd the* LIBERTY, *Peace and Prosperity of this Kingdom.*

You see, *Sir*, how absolutely necessary it is to the Publick Tranquillity, the Quiet of Private Consciences, and the Salvation of Souls, to determine clearly and precisely, so as no honest, well-meaning Person may mistake, *those arbitrary and destructive Measures*, which render a *Change of Government Necessary and Unavoidable*. For, however *Honourable and Glorious* it may be, to resist or desert when Necessity requires ; yet Unnecessary Resistance and Defection is even by Bishop *Headly* allow'd to be damnable. Beside the present Confusion in which it puts a Nation, the Blood and Rapine that attends it, the Violation of Laws, and many other Temporal Mischiefs ; that which is most Deploable in a Christian View, is the Loosening Mens Principles, and Hardening their Consciences, by their endeavouring, not to act according to their Professions, but to mould and form their Doctrines suitable to
their

their Practices and present Conveniency, their Unwillingness to be convinc'd of their Errors and Sins, and yet greater Unwillingness to retract, and repent of them. For it cannot be deny'd, how pertinaciouly the Men, who threw off the Government of King *Charles I.* adhered to the *Good Cause*, the *Blessed Work*, and the *Lord's Work*, as they call'd it; how much they glory'd in it, even after the Restoration, and at the Hour of their Deaths! So that unless your accurate Pen gives us clearer and more infallible Marks of the Difference between the Reasons and the Ends of the Defection from King *Charles*, and from his unfortunate Son, we shall not be able to discern, why both were not equally *Avoidable*, or equally *Necessary*. But it will still appear, as it does to many, a making very bold with the Almighty, in our Addresses to Him, and in what is deliver'd from the Pulpit in His Name; or, in the softest Words, an *Inconsistency*, to confess and deplore, as the most heinous Guilt, and keep a National Humiliation for the One, at the same time that we celebrate and give Thanks for the Other. Instead of exerting ourselves against *arbitrary and destructive Measures* only, and not presuming at a *Change of the Government*, unless when it is *necessary and unavoidable*; we shall still be in Danger of being 'fatally' misled by the noisy Clamour, and plausible Pretences

‘ Pretences of some turbulent and unruly
 ‘ Men, who *complain* loudly of those Grie-
 ‘ vances they *mean* to make heavier, and
 ‘ express a tender Concern for *our* Liberties,
 ‘ when all they *aim* at, *is*, more effectually
 ‘ to enslave *us*. (*Serm.* p. 19.)

‘ That Almighty GOD, for wise and good
 ‘ Reasons, does for some time bear with the
 ‘ Instruments of Evil, and suffer them with-
 ‘ out Controul to proceed to a very great
 ‘ and surprizing Height of Impiety : That
 ‘ there is a determinate Degree of Wicked-
 ‘ ness, beyond which the Divine Providence
 ‘ will not suffer them to pass, but manifestly
 ‘ interposes to prevent the fatal Consequences
 ‘ that wou’d follow from an unrestrain’d,
 ‘ unlimited Power, join’d with a malicious
 ‘ Will, and brutal Disposition to Mischief ;’
 are Truths, which, if they had not been
 evident before, you have, *Sir*, abundantly
 proved : But whether the *Jealousies* and
Discontents, which embroil’d the Reign of the
Father, were more causeless than those which
dethron’d the Son, is still a Question a-
mong a great many Persons of different
Principles and Speculations : Tho’ I think
all, or most, either heartily, or for Decency
Sake, agree, that the former were carry’d by
much too far. The Names of the various
Forms of Government, that follow’d the
Defection from King Charles, were approv’d
 D by

by few, but those who had or hop'd for a Share in the Management. Others, whatever real Alteration they made in the Government, were willing however to retain the Names and Forms made use of in the *Old Establishment*. They will not dispute your being thankful, that 'tho' the Wrath of Man had prevail'd (in this Nation) to an excessive high Degree, so as to murder the Best of Kings, and overturn the Best of Constitutions; it yet pleased GOD to restrain the Remainder of that Wrath, by the Restoration of the Royal Family, and settling us again on (what we call) our ancient Foundations.

You also teach us how to distinguish *Providential Appointments* from *Ordinary Occurrences*: Or that which GOD barely permits, (because He will not destroy His own Work, nor treat us like Necessary Agents, having made us free) from that which He approves: Who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity with Approbation, or tolerate wicked Means for the *Excellency of the End*, to which indeed they are no proper Medium, tho' by His over-ruling Power He brings Good out of Evil, notwithstanding our Malice and Wickedness. And therefore, you direct us to search after GOD's Pleasure, not in a *Train of lucky Accidents*, or Success of any Event, but in the *Righteousness of the Cause*,
and

and the Conformity of our Measures to *Justice* and *Holiness*. For tho' you do not expressly mention the unavoidable Necessity of *good Means*, in order to *good Ends*; I will not think so ill of you, as to suppose you can dispense with them. Tho' some unguarded Expressions should be found here and there, Candor obliges us to overlook them in a Discourse that so well vindicates Providence from the Scandal of *Approving* what it *barely Permits*, and the Divine Purity and *Justice* in suffering the *Way of the Wicked to prosper*, and the *Men to appear happy, who deal very treacherously*.

'Tis hop'd, we shall no more interpret Precepts by Events, but determine the Lawfulness of our Actions by their Uniformity to the Written Rule, and the Example of our Lord and Saviour, the only perfect Pattern: Not by the Authority and Practice of fallible, mortal Men, tho' ever so Learned, so Great and Numerous, or in whatever Reputation for Wisdom and Vertue. *To the Law and to the Testimony; if they speak not, nor act according to this Word, we may safely conclude there is no Health in them.*

It is by this Method only, that we can distinguish *seditions Rulers and more seditions Teachers*, from those *Judges and Guides*, who

do not abuse the *Authority* Christ has *delegated* to them, to *satisfy the Doubts of His People, and explain the Meaning of His Laws.* We beg you therefore, *Sir*, to condescend to set us right, by clearing up the Difficulty complain'd of thro' this *Letter*, and which still remains, notwithstanding all you have so well deliver'd about *Providence, Justice, and Holiness*: Generals, like the Sound of Bells, being apply'd according to every one's particular Humour, Prejudices, and Prepossession.

But *Duty* is of a rigid Nature, not to be bent to the seeming Necessity of our Affairs, or modell'd by our Circumstances and Conveniency, or the Humour of the Times: It depends upon those immoveable Rules of Right and Wrong, and that stable Truth, which is *the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever.* *Divers Weights and divers Measures* are in all Cases *an Abomination to the Lord.* Not all the Learning and Eloquence, nor the Authority and Inspiration of the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, cou'd have brought him off in maintaining Inconsistencies. *For if I build again (says he) the Things which I destroy'd, I make myself a Transgressor.*

Not that it is a Shame to confess our Faults, and acknowledge our Mistakes; nothing more Glorious, nothing more *Necessary* to the Quiet of our Consciences, and future Happiness,

piness, beside all lesser and present Advantages. 'Tis a noble Conquest over the Pride of humane Nature, so loth to own itself, or to have others think we are or have been in the Wrong, even when we know, or vehemently suspect ourselves to be so. And yet it is no more than owning ourselves Men; owning what the Wisest and the Best are most ready to acknowledge. Of which we have so many Examples in the Sacred History, so many Models both of Private and Publick Confessions, that we need not be ashamed to say with that Great and Good Courtier, and Premier Minister, whom Prosperity could not corrupt, and with whom *Reason of State* had no Weight, when contrary to *Reason of Conscience*: O Lord, *to us belongs Confusion of Face; to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Fathers; because we have sinned against thee.* Among the many grievous Enormities with which GOD chargeth his People the Jews, these are not the least; that *Truth is perished and cut off from their Mouths*; in which, it seems, they glory'd; for they said, *we have made Lyes our Refuge, and under Falshood have we hid ourselves*: Even the Prophets walk'd in Lyes; *they strengthen'd the Hands of the Evil-doers, that none did return from his Wickedness; the Leaders of the People caus'd them to err; and they that are led of them, are destroy'd.* There.

Therefore has GOD pronounced a *Wo* unto them that call Evil Good, and Good Evil ; that put Darkness for Light, and Light for Darkness ; that are wise in their own Eyes, and prudent in their own Sight ; who justify the Wicked for Reward, and take away the Righteousness of the Righteous from him. Truth is of a Divine Nature, Simple and Eternal ; it will not mix with Error. The Wrath of GOD, says the Apostle, is reveal'd from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness. It may not be corrupted, nor so much as conceal'd by those who are sent to publish it. *Wo* be to fearful Hearts and faint Hands, and the Sinner that goeth two Ways. *Wo* to him that is faint-hearted ; for he believeth not ; therefore shall he not be defended. The Spirit of the Gospel is a Spirit of Simplicity and Courage ; it enables the Sincere Christian to despise the World, not to be afraid of them who can do no more than kill the Body, but are not able to hurt the Soul. So that I make no doubt, but that you, Sir, and all the faithful Servants of Christ, who are not ashamed of the Gospel of GOD our Saviour, but dare trust Him for Support under their Pressures, and Deliverance out of them in His due time, will join with me in the Collect for the Day.

Almighty

*Almighty GO D, by whose Providence thy
 Servant John Baptist was wonderfully born,
 and sent to prepare the Way of thy Son our Sa-
 viour, by preaching of Repentance; make us
 so to follow his Doctrine and Holy Life, that
 we may truly repent according to his Preaching,
 and after his Example constantly speak the
 Truth, boldly rebuke Vice, and patiently suffer
 for the Truth's Sake; thro' Jesus Christ our
 Lord. Amen.*

I am,

Reverend Sir,

S. John Baptist's
 Day, 1717.

Yours, &c.



F I N I S.



